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EARLY CASTRATION OF THE VERTEBRATE EMBRYO

Reagan in a paper before the American Society of Zoologists, after reviewing the various suggestions as to the place of origin of the germ cells of the vertebrate embryo, supports the contention of Swift that in birds the primordial germ cells are originated in a crescentic area of entoderm very early in the chick embryo, then enter the mesoderm which later invades the region, thence enter the blood stream by way of the blood vessels forming in the mesoderm, and migrate from the base of the mesentery into the position of the gonad.

By cutting out the crescentic area very early Reagan found that sex cells were not to be seen in the gonads at an age when in normal individuals many large sex cells are present in them.

The writer believes that this early castration tends to show that the only primary sexual characters are the sex cells themselves, and that even such organs as the efferent ducts are secondary, dependent on secretions from the gonad. If these secretions are from the interstitial cells rather than the sex cells, it seems that the presence of the sex cells themselves, in the gonad, is necessary in order to induce it.

THE SEGREGATION AND RECOMBINATION OF CHROMOSOMES

Corothers (Proc. Am. Soc. Zool. 1916:22) reports on the behavior of the chromosomes in two species of short horned grasshoppers. Because of the double fact (1) of constancy in the size, shape, and number of the homologous chromosomes in each individual, and (2) of variations in the homologous chromosomes in different individuals resulting in certain constant differences (the latter fact not having been reported before), she finds that the segregation of the chromosomes may be traced in the gametes derived from both parents. This is found to take place according to the law of chance. A further study shows their recombination in such complexes as would result from random unions and as would be demanded in Mendelian inheritance.